

EEOC Sues Home Depot For Disability Discrimination



Article By

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Tuesday, October 3, 2017

Peru, Ill., Store Fired Employee Because of Her Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Fibromyalgia in Violation of ADA, Federal Agency Charges

Home Depot failed to accommodate and then fired an employee who had a disability-related emergency at its Peru, Ill., store, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit it filed on Sept. 28.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, the large national home improvement retailer violated federal law by firing April Stevenson, an employee with irritable bowel syndrome and fibromyalgia, rather than allowing her to take a short break to care for herself.

The EEOC brought the suit under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits disability discrimination in employment, after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process. The case (*EEOC v. The*

Home Depot / Home Depot U.S.A., Inc., Civil Action No. 17-cv-06990) was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, and has been assigned to U.S. District Judge Robert W. Gettleman. The EEOC is seeking full make-whole relief, including back pay, compensatory and punitive damages, and non-monetary measures to correct Home Depot's practices going forward.

"Our investigation revealed that Home Depot fired Ms. Stevenson after she had a medical emergency related to her disabilities that required prompt attention," said EEOC Chicago District Director Julianne Bowman. "Home Depot failed to provide her adequate means to attend to her disability, then fired her for minor policy infractions that were caused only by Home Depot's failure to accommodate her."

EEOC Chicago District Regional Attorney Greg Gochanour said, "The ADA requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities. Here, Ms. Stevenson simply needed a short break to care for herself and then return to work - an accommodation that Home Depot easily could have provided."

Home Depot's corporate headquarters are in Georgia.

The EEOC's Chicago District Office is responsible for processing charges of employment discrimination, administrative enforcement, and the conduct of agency litigation in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and North and South Dakota, with Area Offices in Milwaukee and Minneapolis.

Read the original article on the EEOC website [here](#).

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